AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

The listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

1.   (Currently Amended) In a computer network including a server computer system network-attachable to a plurality of client computer systems, a method of authenticating at least one of a subset of the plurality of client computer systems and/or users thereof, the method comprising the following:

an act of the a server computer system receiving a request from a requesting client computer system, the request including an instruction identifying the at least one authentication methodology that is to be used when for authenticating the a subset of client computer systems when the subset of client computer systems request service from the server computer system and/or users thereof;

an act of the server computer system receiving a subsequent request, the subsequent request comprising a request from the subset of client computer systems for service from the server computer system subset of client computer systems; and

an act of the server computer system, upon receiving the subsequent request, authenticating the requesting subset of the client computer systems using at least the least one authentication methodology identified in the instruction.

2.   (Original) The method in accordance with Claim 1, wherein the instruction includes at least an instruction to accept an assertion authentication method for use in authenticating the subset of client computer systems.

3.   (Original) The method in accordance with Claim 1, wherein the instruction includes at least an instruction to accept a basic HTTP authentication method for use in authenticating the subset of client computer systems.

4.   (Original) The method in accordance with Claim 1, wherein the instruction includes at least an instruction to accept a digest authentication method for use in authenticating the subset of client computer systems.

5.   (Original) The method in accordance with Claim 1, wherein the instruction includes at least an instruction to accept an NPLM authentication method for use in authenticating the subset of client computer systems.

6.   (Original) The method in accordance with Claim 1, wherein the subset of client computer systems is a single client computer system.

7.   (Original) The method in accordance with Claim 1, wherein the request comprises a data structure that represents an eXtensible Markup Language (XML) element.

8.   (Original) A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for performing the acts recited in Claim 1.

9-17.   (Cancelled).

18.   (Currently Amended) In a computer network including a server computer system network-attachable to a plurality of client computer systems, a method of controlling a type of authentication methodology used when the server computer system authenticates at least a subset of the plurality of computer systems and/or users thereof, the method comprising the following:

an act of a requesting client computer system composing a request including an instruction identifying the an authentication methodology that is to be used by a server computer system forwhen authenticating the a subset of client computer systems and/or users thereof; and

a specific act of the requesting client computer system transmitting the request to the server computer system, wherein the authentication methodology identified in the instruction is used by the server computer system to authenticate the subset of client computer systems when the server computer system receives one or more subsequent requests from the subset of client computer systems for service from the server computer system.

19.   (Original) The method in accordance with Claim 18, wherein the instruction includes at least an instruction to accept an assertion authentication method for use in authenticating the subset of client computer systems.

20.   (Original) The method in accordance with Claim 18, wherein the instruction includes at least an instruction to accept a basic HTTP authentication method for use in authenticating the subset of client computer systems.

21.   (Original) The method in accordance with Claim 18, wherein the instruction includes at least an instruction to accept a digest authentication method for use in authenticating the subset of client computer systems.

22.   (Original) The method in accordance with Claim 18, wherein the instruction includes at least an instruction to accept an NTLM authentication method for use in authenticating the subset of client computer systems.

23.   (Original) The method in accordance with Claim 18, wherein the subset of client computer systems is a single client computer system.

24.   (Original) The method in accordance with Claim 18, wherein the request comprises a data structure that represents an eXtensible Markup Language (XML) element.

25.   (Original) A computer-readable medium having computer-executable instructions for performing the acts recited in Claim 18.

26.   (Currently Amended) A computer-readable medium having stored thereon a data structure having a plurality of fields, the data structure comprising:

a plurality of client identifier field fields that each identify a identifies a subset of client computer system systems and/or users thereof that are is connected to a server computer system; and

for each client computer system, the data structure further comprising an at least one authentication field that identifies one or more an authentication methods method to be used to by the server computer system when for authenticating any of the subset of client computer system systems and/or users thereof upon receiving a request from the client computer system for service.

27.   (Currently Amended) The computer-readable medium in accordance with Claim 26, wherein the each client identifier field identifies a different single client computer system.

28.   (New) A computer-readable medium as recited in claim 26, wherein the server computer system has access to the data structure prior to receiving the request from the client computer system.

29.   (New) A computer-readable medium as recited in claim 26, wherein the data structure is further configured to be altered upon being stored, so as to allow a client computer to use additional authentication methods.